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Alabama Technical Institute and College for Women

BULLETIN

Founder's Day

October 12th, 1896-1920

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ALABAMA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AND COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
Montevallo, Alabama

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The Sixth Summer School of the Alabama Technical Institute and College For Women

Will begin May 31, 1921, and continue for six weeks.

Regular courses will be offered for extension of certificates for teachers, for high school and college credits.

Special courses in Home Economics, Music, Art, Physical Training, Expression, Dramatics.

High school teachers in service will find helpful work in English, Mathematics, History, Education, Art, Home Economics for general improvement.

Rates very reasonable.

Write to President T. W. Palmer, Montevallo, for catalog.

Founder's Day, October 12th, 1920

THE Alabama Technical Institute and College for Women opened its doors for students on October 12th, 1896, just twenty-four years ago. We are now preparing for the silver anniversary at the next commencement. For the past ten or twelve years the twelfth of October has been observed with brief but appropriate exercises as Founder's Day. This is done that we may not forget the trials and struggles of those who labored to establish this institution and have brought it up to the present degree of efficiency. On this day, too, we not only point with pride to past achievements, but we take a forward look and try to catch a vision of the work that is before us. While much has been done, much more remains to be done. We are now in the beginning of the twenty-fifth year. This is an opportune time to look backward for a brief period and then take a determined stand for the successful completion of the first quarter century.

The Sophomore class had charge of this program, and the following was arranged for this occasion. A part of the program was given in the auditorium and the remainder on the campus in front of the dormitory.

Hymn.

Reading of the One Hundredth Psalm.

Prayer.

Talk by Mr. C. L. Meroney, subject: "Montevallo's Part in the Founding of the Alabama Technical Institute and College for Women."

Line of march to the campus.

Talk by Miss Lucile Crabtree of the Sophomore class in presenting a tree. (As it was too early in the season for tree planting, a stone marker with 1920 engraved on it was set where the tree will be planted later.)

Singing of class song, showering the marker with flowers, and forming the letters "A. T. I. & C."

Singing of college song by student body.

Mr. C. L. Meroney, the first speaker, is a native of Montevallo and is thoroughly familiar with the history of this community and the college. He was one of the leaders in the movement organized by Captain H. C. Reynolds to have the college located here. The story is an interesting one, and by special request Mr. Meroney consented to talk on that subject. A brief report of his speech is published in this bulletin.

The remaining exercises on the campus were very impressive, and served to arouse a deeper interest in the future development of the institution.

It may be well to state that this college was not conceived in the minds of educators, but was the result of a bill introduced into the Senate of Alabama by a layman in the cause of education, the Hon. Sol. D. Bloch, of Camden, who, in going among his constituents, realized more fully than ever before that the State of Alabama, while making a fair provision for the education of its boys, was doing almost nothing for its girls. He, accordingly, introduced a bill in 1891 for the establishment of a cultural and technical school for girls. The state was not then ready for such an advanced movement, and the bill was lost. Mr. Bloch did not give up, but made another effort in 1893, and the bill was passed with the proviso that it was not to go into effect until 1895, and, as before stated, the first students were received on October 12th, 1896. From that day to this there has been a series of struggles and successes. The future looks bright and greater developments will be made from year to year.

The next commencement, May 21-23, 1921, will be the silver anniversary. It is hoped that former students and friends generally throughout the country will attend, and by their presence and counsel give the college their blessing in its start for the fiftieth mile post.

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Montevallo's Part in the Founding of The Alabama Technical Institute and College for Women

By C. L. Meroney

YOUNG women, this morning in telling the story of the locating of this college in our town, it will be well to summarize in a brief way the history of Montevallo.

In 1818 a band of settlers (including my own grandparents from whom I have learned this early history) turned westward from South Carolina; and, after a long trip on horseback and in wagons, arrived in the valley east of here; to the south, along the Little Cahaba River, other settlers were beginning to clear away timber and to establish homes. So far-removed were all the settlers and so crude were the means of transportation that friendly visits were very rare. Schoolhouses were frequently six miles from the residences of the school children. For religious worship they assembled at a camping ground located near a spring. It was these gatherings in the spring of the year that inspired the principle of cooperation and the idea of community building and betterment.

About 1825 the National Government granted the land on which this college now stands to the state for the University of

Alabama. While we have no authentic record of such in the minutes of the Legislature, the early citizens have stated that Montevallo was considered as the site for the University. However, Tuscaloosa was finally selected, a fact that disappointed our citizens keenly.

Nevertheless, not discouraged, they began improving their natural resources. Fertile lands yielded bountiful crops; wealth poured in: Montevallo became the commercial center of Central Alabama. The railroad, projected from Selma to a point on the Tennessee River, had as its northern terminus for several years this town. Montevallo became the market place for Jefferson, St. Clair, and Blount Counties.

A second time Montevallo seemed about to receive a prize at the hands of the state, and a second time was disappointed. I speak of the location of the Capitol. Montgomery was chosen over Montevallo by a majority of only two votes in the Legislature.

Having failed to get, first, the University and then the Capitol, she turned her attention to better schools and better churches. In 1854 this chapel was built for a Female Institute. For a while it flourished, but the dark days of the Civil War and Reconstruction came. In front of this building a company of young men was formed; in front of this building the young girls of this town, in a beautiful and impressive service, presented these boys with the Stars and Bars of the Confederacy. Here, in this boarding school for girls, they listened for news at the front. Here, too, they feared an uprising of the negroes.

In spite of these troublous times, Dr. Meredith, his wife, and daughters kept a coeducational school. Many of the older citizens of Montevallo received their training from them. After Dr. Meredith, Mr. Griggs, a young educator, conducted here one of the most successful schools we have had.

At this time, 1895, Honorable Solomon D. Bloch introduced a bill in the Legislature creating the Alabama Girls Industrial School. A third time Montevallo, realizing her advantages, summoned her efforts to win the school.

Very earnestly did the citizens cooperate. Before the business meetings held to plan the work of securing the school for Montevallo, devotional exercises were given in which God's blessings were invoked. Committees were appointed to raise funds. The campus and this chapel building were bought for an extremely low price from citizens eager to contribute. Every one gave liberally in money, time, and support. Committees went to the large cities—Birmingham, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Nashville to ask business houses for contributions. Sometimes the committees received money, sometimes furnishings, even food. I recall that a packing house in Cincinnati gave a barrel of lard; another firm supplied stoves for the building. So thoroughly was the work done

that when the committee selected went to Governor Oates it gave not vague promises of what Montevallo would do, but certified checks showing actual cash in hand and deeds to property. Montevallo received encouragement on being one of the few towns selected by the trustees for further investigation. Finally, after a thorough deliberation, Montevallo was selected as the site for this Institution. Young women, the third and greatest prize which she had sought was hers. She had been denied the University and Capitol, only that she might be a more fitting place for you to receive your training.

Her work was not ended, however. Miss Julia Tutwiler, selected as the first president, being unwilling to leave her school in Livingston, resigned. Captain Reynolds, one of our own citizens, was called upon to assume the duties of the office. Once again he called upon the citizens. This time he appealed to them to open their homes to the girls. Immediately the response came—every home was filled to its capacity with girls, boarding for nine dollars a month.

Thus, in spite of difficulties, in spite of discouragement, our dreams were realized. In October, 1896, the citizens were rewarded by having with them the first students of this college. You can hardly appreciate our happiness on that opening day. We, citizens, have watched the development of this school under Presidents Reynolds, Peterson, and Palmer. We have seen her grow in buildings, in enrollment of students, and in course of study; but more, we have watched hundreds of young women grow and go forth better, nobler, more intelligent to a state rendered stronger and greater through their development. As in 1896 we welcomed each girl to our hearts, so today we give you in unstinted measure our love, our prayers, our trust.

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Remarks on The Tree

By Miss Lucile Crabtree

WE, the College Sophomores, present this emblem to mark this spot for an oak tree which we present to our school as a marker of the close of its twenty-fourth and the beginning of its twenty-fifth year. We are not planting the tree on this day because this is not the time of the year to plant trees. Therefore, it shall be placed here the last of November or the first of December.

Let us compare the oak to our college, the trunk being its foundation from whence its main support comes. May the trunk of this tree never decay, but grow to be strong, well-rounded, and tower above all other trees on this campus. The same with our college—may she grow to be broad and reach the highest of ideals.

The branches represent our faculty and officers. As the limbs broaden the tree, so our faculty and officers broaden the intellect of this school. The tree is always putting out new limbs to take the places of the old ones. So, it is with our faculty.

The leaves of this mighty oak represent our student body. We have chosen the willow oak because this tree only sheds a part of its leaves at a time; therefore, it is never bare. Our student body resembles the leaves of this tree in that at the close of each year the graduating class leaves and at the beginning of each new session a new class comes in, but there are always classes in between that keep our college ever bright, enthusiastic, and beautiful.

There is yet another way by which we can compare our college with the oak. The tree starts as a small plant and develops slowly but surely until after it has reached a certain height it is not only beautiful but of great service to the world. Our college started as a high school and is steadily growing until, after next year, it will be recognized as one of the standard colleges of our state. It has done, is doing, and will continue to do great service, and service is the thing that counts.

So we present this gift to our A. T. I. and C. W.

A—is for all of us,
T—for the truest,
I—is for the ideals for which we stand.
C—is for our college,
W—our women—the best in the land.

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The College Woman

A Talk by Miss Brooke, Head of the Department of Education, to the Y. W. C. A.

At no other time in history has the education of girls and of young women been a matter of grave concern to so many men and women as it is today. The responsibility with the attendant privileges of suffrage has opened up a storehouse of opportunities and obligations that thinkers along all lines are eager to utilize. The last of the forces opposing the development of women is removed. It only remains for the women to enter and possess the stronghold. So it has seemed fitting for us, here in Montevallo, the one state institution existing primarily for the education of the young women of Alabama, to pause a few minutes tonight, in the early part of the new year, and to consider our own institution and ourselves as members of the school body. I have no new ideas to give you tonight. It is my desire merely to recall to your mind certain old, well tried ideas—ideas that have proved their usefulness in more than one instance in other situations.

In the first place I want to remind the girls, the student body, that the institution was established with the very definite end in view of giving to the girls and young women of Alabama the type of education, or training, that service in the state demanded of the women of the state. The school was not created to give to men and women teaching and administrative positions. It was created because there were girls and young women in Alabama to be educated; its course of study was organized to give these young women the information, skill, and motives that the state needed to have its women possess and use. Hence, the fact that the school exists is an evidence of the interest on the part of the state in the education of young women, and an expression of the confidence of the state in the young women and girls—a tribute to their ability and readiness to profit by the opportunities thus presented. To put this thought differently is merely to say that the plant—the buildings, the grounds, the faculty, the course of study—in fact everything that goes to make up the running machinery of the institution, except the student body itself, are furnished by the state of Alabama for a very definite purpose; all are means to an end. That purpose or end is the enrichment of the lives of the girls and young women that come to the school. The plant and all that goes with it constitute a gift of the state to you, collectively and singly. At the time the institution was opened it represented the best the state could do. As we look back we may be inclined to think of it as being a feeble beginning. It would have been an impotent beginning if one provision had not been made, and that provision was for growth. There has never been a period in the history of Montevallo that change was not taking place. Above all things we have been a growing body. Too, we have had our growing pains, but we have accepted them as promise of an increase of stature, and resolutely and uncomplainingly endured them. In fact we had to grow to keep pace with the state. It has become a commonplace to say Alabama has taken great strides within the last twenty-five years, and we have endeavored to keep up so that at no time would the state be ashamed of what its women are doing.

But not all the changes at Montevallo have come from an outside stimulus. From the beginning, I am told, there has been a student body here that was different—a gathering of unusual young girls. We have a highly selected group of students. Only the girls who have something in them want to come to Montevallo, or if those of the opposite sort get in, they become so uncomfortable that they cannot remain. The something that makes Montevallo different, that puzzles our visitors who have been in many other institutions, the spirit that makes men like Dr. Owen Lovejoy and women like Mrs. Woolman want to come back is something that I cannot put into words. It is the intangible thing of the spirit that is perhaps the most priceless gift the institution can

make to any one of us, either as members of the faculty or as members of the student body. It is a complex of many influences, some coming from the different departments, some from the student body as a whole, some from the administrative forces, but in a large measure, I think, from the various organizations in the school.

Perhaps to my mind no phase of our school history is more significant both of inner change and of our unconscious keeping step with the development in the larger life of the state than the growth of the organizations—the Y. W. C. A., the Athletic Association, the Student Government Association, etc. The existence of these organizations means that the girls take a large part actively in the school life. Twenty-five years ago that could not have been. Women were supposed to be seen and not heard. The idea of a woman taking a place on a platform was unpopular. Now we have women in all sorts of responsible and public positions, sometimes by political appointment and sometimes as reward of merit, because she is the best one for the place. The point is women are to be found in high places for just the same reasons and for just the same purpose that men are there, because they fit the place, can do the work, can meet the responsibilities, and profit by the privileges of the position.

Let us for one moment picture our institution as it is today. What do we find here already prepared for us? In the first place, to revert to the former statement, we find the physical plant with its buildings, its equipment, its facilities for training and for health and bodily comfort; we find a course of study organized into departments, each with its own specific contribution to make to the enlarging and development of our lives; we find the organizations in whose activities we may take part; we find the achievements of the last twenty-five years, with their stories of personal sacrifice and glorified service of men and women consecrated to the cause of education of the girls of Alabama. It has meant a great deal to those men and women who have given so freely and so willingly of their powers to building up an institution like this with its promise of continued growth and of richer and fuller usefulness. Through us and those to follow, their lives and services will go on "like a stream with an ever widening margin of green." It is just as significant an experience to be permitted to share in the results of their labors. Here today we have a chance to show appreciation—that is an opportunity to develop and express one of the finest human powers. To sow is not greater than to reap. The value of both depends largely on the spirit in which the act is performed. To keep faith we at Montevallo must show our appreciation of the work of those who have brought us thus far, else we pauperize our own spiritual power.

Besides the achievements and traditions of the institution we have at present the departments, the organizations, the opportunities of contact with each other, for friendships, etc. All these I shall pass with just a few words. The different departments were organized in the institution because each had a special contribution to make to the education of the girls; the same is true of each organization. Each has something to give you that no other can offer. The amount and the kind of gain that each of you derives from each department and from each organization is partly, or largely, I should say, a matter of your own nature and interest. Just as only girls that want what Montevallo has to offer come to us, so only those girls who want what the different departments can offer are greatly benefited by the work of those departments. In other words, the departments and organizations cannot force their contributions on you. You must show a willing mind to get the gifts that are yours for the taking. In every day words, it is up to you to determine what and how much you get from the activities of the institution. That is, for the most part it is up to you, not altogether. Sometime it is the fault of the department, of the organization, of the institution that an individual student fails to come into her own. Right here let me call your attention for a moment to the fact that more than two-thirds of the girls in the state of Alabama of your age are not having such opportunities.

Now we come to the point of importance and that is: Are we keeping faith with the State that made it possible for us to have this chance? What can we do that we are not doing? Are we backing our state? That is a question we should all ask ourselves—teachers and pupils: "Am I backing my state?" If we are to keep pace with the development of the state, if we are to keep faith with the state, we must make it possible right here at Montevallo to train women of large intellectual power, of rich sympathetic outlook on life, with ability to go out and do whatever the state of Alabama needs to have its women do. Alabama demands women of trained intellect, of large sympathies, of ability to do the work of the world. If the women to meet those requirements are to come from Montevallo, we must take on the ways of the college and lay aside our high school habits and attitudes; we must think of ourselves as college women and not high school girls.

There is a world of difference between the two—the college woman and the high school girl. The college girl or woman is the high school girls several years older. She is more steadfast, more independent and safer in her independence; she is more aware of the existence of other people and more ready to recognize the rights and worth of others. The college girl is interested in her daily life. She finds today vitally important. She does not defer

real living until she is out of school. She makes the small group she is a part of feel the importance of that group, but she never lets the small group interfere with her work or place in the larger group. The college girl is a group worker.

Personally, she is wholesome, cleanminded, full of fine enthusiasms for fine and worth while things. She is both a thinker and a doer. She does not stop with thinking, but goes on to see the thought put into concrete expression. She is positive, finding her happiness not in the things she does not do, nor the things that are done for her, but in those that she has a part in. She measures up in the classroom, on the campus, in athletics, in social gatherings.

The college girl is democratic. She likes all sorts of people, learning early that to understand all is to appreciate and value all and to forgive all. She sees the human element in all people, and overlooks the artificial differences as birth, dress, position, etc. The college girl wants and demands her chance, and she wants it on her own merit, and she is willing to give every other person a like chance. She scorns no type of knowledge. The college girl studies herself until she knows what she wants to do and what she can do. Then she goes at it, working both independently and co-operatively.

The girl of today learns early in her college life that science abhors wastefulness. So the college girl is not wasteful of her energy, her time, or material things, especially is she not wasteful of money. She scorns misuse of things and people. She learns early that the same idea of wise and full utilization of everything —both material things and personal powers—that science demands is the imperative demand of religion. What is salvation but saving—but utilizating one's powers for the best cause in the best way? To seek salvation is to earnestly seek ways of being of the greatest use in the world, is to serve for the highest cause. It is to give of one's all for the need of the many. The college girl is not concerned with hoarding, but with using. She gives of herself freely; sometimes she is in the lead, sometimes among those led. Surely leadership is one of the marks of the college girl; none the less is the college girl the best of followers.

Perhaps if we were seeking a motto for the college of today, we would be safe in choosing, "I'll back you," for we would find college girls and women backing more movements than they are leading. Yet they are the leaders, too. The point is, she can do both, and knows when she should take hold and push through and when she should pass on the word of support, or merely put her shoulder to the wheel and help another get something done.

Now, how shall we here at Montevallo become more of the college and less of the high school? Why should we, and how can we?

We should do it because the time is at hand when there is a big piece of work to be done in the state that only college women can do—work that calls for college training on the part of those attempting to do this job. The state set us apart a quarter of a century ago as the one institution specialized to fit girls to do the work of the women of the state. We must keep faith with the state.

How are we going to make the transition into a fuller college life? One thing we shall have to do—we shall have to work together. It is no one man's job. It cannot be done by the administrative powers in the institution, nor by the faculty, nor by the student body. If it is done at all, it will be accomplished by joint action, all working together, each contributing according to its abilities. For the most part, the growth is of necessity unconscious, but this unconscious gorwth can be stimulated by reflective effort and purposeful conduct. If we think and speak of ourselves as a college, if we—both teachers and pupils—do our work according to college standards, if we strive for the thoughts and interests of a college people we shall find that a great change has come about. If we rid our minds of ideas of cheap rentimentality, if we talk less of charity, of sacrifice, of unselfishness, of the beauty of service, think less of forming character; if, in a word, we do the work our hands find to do with all our might, thoroughly, and in fine spirit, if we get hold of the fact that there is a tie that binds all of us together, and strive to get the worth of the people we are thrown with, and to give ourselves fully to those we come in contact with—we shall have taken steps toward achieving the "more abundant life" that is the privilege of every girl that enters into a real college group.

As a closing thought, let me say that the education of women, the chance to get an education, the removal of the barriers against the development of women along all lines are all steps in making actual the saying of Christ, which is, I believe, the motto of the Young Women's Christian Association, "I am come that you may have life and that you may have it more abundantly."

Perhaps to no other group of women has that word been given the meaning it has for women. Just so far as we take into ourselves this abundant life, to the extent that we help others to take it for themselves, to that extent are we making God appear on this earth. Not by prayer and communion alone, we become one with God, but by doing the deed that makes him actual on earth.